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29 March 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chairman, Clandestine Service  
Historical Board

SUBJECT : CS Historical Program, Progress  
Report, 1 January 1970 to  
1 March 1971

REFERENCE : Memo for C/CIA Historical Staff,  
from CS Historical Officer,  
22 Feb 71; Subj: Status Report  
for 1 July - 31 December 1970

1. Recommendations concerning the program are  
contained in paragraph 8.

2. CS/HS records reflect progress of the CS  
Historical program during 1970 as follows:

a. 1 January 1970

Total CS Historical Program	347 histories
Total published	132
To be completed	215
Number of writers	113

b. 1 January 1971

Total CS Historical Program	304
Total published	155
To be completed	149
Number of writers	62 (12 part- time)

3. Dimensions of the Program:

When the CS program was formulated in 1964  
the components, together with the Historical Board  
and the Historical Staff, identified over 1,000  
subjects on which it was felt chronological histories

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or monographs should be written. Titles have been eliminated from the list for several reasons: Some activities were initiated around 1965 and hence should not figure in the "catching-up" phase of the program which covers a 20-year period beginning in 1945 and ending around 1965. Other histories were combined and still others were eliminated entirely as not warranting inclusion. Cutting the program back to a manageable size has also been a consideration. The catching-up phase now comprises 304 histories. A program for the "on-going" phase, starting in 1972 and picking up from 1965, has not yet been drawn up.

4. It will be noted that 23 histories were published in 1970. This compares with 52 in 1969 and 27 in 1968. Four histories have been published to date in 1971 (1 March). The number of histories published during a period is not necessarily an accurate reflection of the effort expended, however. Some of the earlier "histories" contain four to ten pages of text. Recent publications are more substantial, some running into three and more volumes and a thousand or so pages of text, and requiring more extensive research. Although some of the earlier histories were extremely well done, quality of writing and research has generally improved. Another factor: During 1968-69 historical studies prepared by the components antedating and independent of the CS Historical Program were bound and incorporated into the CS Historical List.

5. The number of writers we carry on our lists for a given period can also be misleading. Some work briefly and then retire or are transferred to other assignments. Some components' listings of writers are expressions of intent which never materialize. In only a few isolated cases have "part-time" writers managed to complete histories. In spite of these qualifications, however, it appears that more writers were engaged and more histories written in 1969 than in 1970. From discussions with component managements it appears that reductions in force and retirements have removed some of the more competent writers from the program and reduced the ability of the components to assign competent talent to the writing of history.

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6. The number of writers is not distributed in proportion to task at hand. [redacted] and SB have sizable groups of writers. The NE and AF historical staffs, with a large number of station histories to be written have less writing strength and almost certainly will not be able to meet the 31 December 1971 deadline for the catching-up phase, even if additional writers are assigned in the near future. To date 37 station and base histories have been published but these for the most part concern the smaller, less complicated and less significant posts. The divisions have been slow to undertake preparation of histories of the larger and more active stations. [redacted]

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histories, however, are well under way and will probably be completed this year. A draft of the [redacted]

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[redacted] history was completed in 1970 but is being withheld from publication since WH Division management regards it as too sensitive to process through the Historical Staff. NE Division plans to resume work on the [redacted] history in the

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near future and hopes to be able to complete it in time for publication in 1971. Work is just being started on [redacted]. No significant effort, however, has been initiated on other major stations, including [redacted]

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[redacted]. We have urged the divisions to focus their efforts on these stations since in our view their histories would be of more value and significance to the CS than those of a greater number of the smaller posts.

7. Access and Security:

Some writers and management personnel in the DDP are concerned about what they regard as security hazards involved in the compilation of operational and station histories in the manner and detail advocated by the Historical Staff. They worry, for instance, that future organizational and policy changes will broaden access to the histories and make them available to persons inside and outside the Agency who have no need to know.

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In spite of known Agency and CS policy, some are also concerned that the Chief of the CIA Historical Staff and his deputy, neither of whom are members of the Clandestine Service, review and approve drafts and discuss histories with writers. (Retention of the Mexico City history by WH Division cited above is a case in point.) Counseling and guidance by the Chief and his deputy have unquestionably been of value to the CS historical program but it is equally clear that in some quarters their access to CS material is an inhibiting factor and that significant sensitive material is withheld from the histories on their account. As we move into the "on-going" CS historical program covering the 1965-70 period, and bearing more immediately on current operations, these concerns and inhibitions, unless alleviated, will probably increase.


8. Recommendations:

a. An early meeting of the CS Historical Board should be convened to consider what further measures might be taken to reassure component managements and historical staffs with regard to the secure handling and controlled access to CS histories.

b. The Board should also consider recently proposed deletions from the schedule of "catching-up" (1971) histories and clarify for the Secretary the extent of his authority to approve such deletions.

c. The nature of the continuing, "on-going", CS historical program should also be discussed by the Board.

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Executive Secretary  
CS Historical Board

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